

Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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Editorial

No Man Can Serve Two Masters

Last week editorial comment was made on one of those familiar sayings of our Lord which has suffered much from misapplication, the result of wresting it from its true setting. The words at the head of this article are another one of those sayings of Jesus taken from the Sermon on the Mount greatly misunderstood and hence misapplied. The word "master" carries with it the idea of a slave, and the meaning clearly is that no one can be the slave of two masters opposite in character, feelings, motives, impulses and purposes. When one is the slave of money, that is when money has become his master instead of his servant, he cannot at the same time be the servant of God. No one can belong absolutely, body, soul, spirit, in feelings and energy, to two masters. Almost numberless times we have heard it said of certain men who are regarded as worldly and covetous that they are serving two masters. This is not true, for no man *can* do that; it is declared by the Lord himself as an impossibility. Some people have fears that probably after all they may be serving two masters, but their fears are groundless. No living man is serving two masters. The language implies that no sane man will ever try to serve two masters. Can you imagine a man right in his mind trying to travel east and west at one and the same time? Your imagination is not capable of such a thing. And this is the meaning and strength of the Lord's language, that not only can a man *not* serve two masters but that a sane man will no more try such a thing than he will try to go east and west at the same time. That in this world every man is serving one of two masters is certain; equally certain it is that he is serving one only, and that his service is not divided between the two. There is no half hearted service. That is the clear cut declaration of the Lord Jesus when he said "no man can serve two masters." A half hearted service would imply that either a man gives half his service to God and the other half to mammon, or that he serves God or mammon with a half heart, and according to the master's own statement both are impossible.

The Situation in Greater New York

The reform administration elected in New York City last fall with Mayor Low at the head finds itself face to face with one of the most complicated problems of municipal government it is possible to conceive, and whatever policy the present administration may adopt, the results, which will be watched with keen interest, not in New York City only but from all parts of the country, will have a very important determination upon the future of reform in the great metrop-

olis of America. We do not wish to speak rashly or unadvisedly touching the policy of the new administration. It is a great and difficult problem, the problem of municipal government, and they only are in a position to criticise who have given much time and thought to the solution of the problem; men of wide experience in the management of city affairs; men well versed in the science of sociology, who have made a special study of the subject in its relation to city life and government. To successfully govern a heterogeneous population of more than 4,000,000, representing almost every nationality under the heavens is a task the performance of which will tax the wisdom and statesmanship of the best men in the country.

One of the first and most important, and probably most critical questions with which the new administration has to deal is the question whether the saloons shall be allowed to keep open on the Sabbath. This matter of the enforcement of the Raines law has agitated New York from the moment of the election in November. The law was utterly disregarded by the former administration both as to midnight and Sunday closing. It now appears that the new administration favors a modification of the law so as to allow beer to be sold on Sunday. The existing law against Sunday desecration by the saloons is as stringent as it can be made, and is supported by the Governor of the State, by the country voters, and by the Christian public sentiment of the city. But it is pleaded that the law is violated, and can not be enforced. Of course it is violated, and what law against crime is not? But is this an argument for the repeal of the law? Is there any law in existence that stands for decency and righteousness which the saloon does not violate? If the situation illustrates and emphasizes one thing more than another it is the tremendous power of the saloon. Not content with the week days and nights, as all decent avocations are, it demands the Sabbath. This, the holy day, must also be sacrificed to its wicked greed. God's commandments and the moral sense of the decent people of the community must be treated with contempt. But what can you expect? A business which thrives by destroying its patrons' body and soul will hardly trouble itself about a little thing like the Sabbath, or public sentiment, or God's command. Some reputable journals and some distinguished prelates are lending their influence to the Sunday saloon on the ground that it is the lesser of two evils. Among the men brought into prominence in the discussion of the question are the Right Reverend Bishop Potter and Doctor Rainsford, both of New York City. The former, Bishop Potter, has evidently changed his views on the question of Sunday opening since the year 1895, for at that time he was openly and personally on the side of Sunday closing and